

to read on his behalf a paper he has written  
for it. This  
was a " definition of the novel," prepared, said  
Zola, accord-  
ing to the methods of Taine,<sup>1</sup> and it embodied  
at least the  
germs of the theories which he afterwards  
applied to his  
own work. When writing to Valabregue on the  
subject he  
was in a somewhat despondent mood, for his  
position on  
" Le Figaro " had now become very precarious.  
He wished  
to undertake some serious work, he said, but it  
was impera-  
tive that he should raise money, and he was "  
very unskil-  
ful in such matters." Indeed, in spite of every  
effort, he  
did not earn more than an average of three  
hundred francs  
a month. Nevertheless, he still received his  
friends every  
Thursday, when Pissarro, Bailie, Solari, and  
others went " to  
complain with him, about the hardness of the  
tim.es." <sup>2</sup> And  
he at least had a ray of comfort amid his  
difficulties, for he  
was now in love, was loved in. return, and  
hoped to marry  
at the first favourable opportunity. The young  
person was  
tall, dark haired, very charming, very  
intelligent, with a  
gift, too, of that prudent thrift which makes so  
many  
Frenchwomen the most desirable of  
companions for the  
men who have to fight for position and fame.  
Her name  
was Alexandrine Gabrielle Mesley; before very  
long she  
became Madame Zola.

In 1867 Zola put forth a large quantity of work. Early in the year he quitted "Le Figaro," and bade good-bye to the Quartier Latin, removing to Batignolles, quite at the other end of Paris; his new address being 1, Rue Moncey, at the corner of the Avenue de Clichy. He was

<sup>1</sup> The substance of the paper was worked into the articles which Zola collected in the volume entitled "Le Roman Experimental," Paris, 1880 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> "La Grande Revue," May, 1903, p. 254.